

SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 19 with the following rewritten paragraph:

--The command section of the frame is used by the devices of the network for exchanging protocol messages. Generally, a response to a message in the command section is transmitted in the command section of the next immediate frame. In the presently preferred embodiment, the command section operates in a "slotted ALOHA" mode and in a "TDMA" mode as managed by the master device. A detailed treatment of slotted ALOHA protocols is provided by L.G. Roberts in "ALOHA packet system with and without slots and capture," Computer Communication Review, vol. 5, pp. 28-42, April 1975 and is incorporated herein by reference. The present invention employs a modified slotted ALOHA protocol as described in ~~the copending~~ U.S. patent 6,597,683 ~~application~~ entitled "MEDIUM ACCESS CONTROL PROTOCOL FOR CENTRALIZED WIRELESS NETWORK COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT" ~~having attorney docket number "INT 99-005" filed on September 10, 1999~~ which is expressly incorporated herein by reference. The slotted ALOHA mode is used by the master device to invite protocol messages from the slave devices. For example, a first slave device may respond to an ALOHA command with a message requesting a data link with a second device in order to transmit data to the second slave device. Other responses to an ALOHA command may include a message indicating the slave device is starting up, shutting down, or is busy. Other protocol message replies or commands as is known in the art may also be used.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 25, line 7, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--The master device 12 carries out the operation of managing network data communication via the exchange of "protocol messages" in the command section 26 of frame 22 as described in ~~co~~pending U.S. patent 6,597,683 application entitled "MEDIUM ACCESS CONTROL PROTOCOL FOR CENTRALIZED WIRELESS NETWORK COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT" ~~having attorney docket number "INT 99-005" filed on September 10, 1999~~ which is expressly incorporated herein by reference.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 25, line 22, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Each slave device 14a through 14n is normally set to "offline" after its initial activation. Each slave device must first be "registered" with the master device 12 before the slave device may engage in data communication with the other slave devices of the network, Once a device is registered with the master device 12, the device is considered "online" and ready for communication. The registration sequence is described in further detail in ~~co~~pending U.S. patent 6,597,683 application entitled "MEDIUM ACCESS CONTROL PROTOCOL FOR CENTRALIZED WIRELESS NETWORK COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT" ~~having attorney docket number "INT 99-005" filed on September 10, 1999~~ which is expressly incorporated herein by reference.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 26, line 18, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--The command section 26 of TDMA frame 22 provided by the MAC protocol of the present invention is structured and configured to operate in a "slotted ALOHA" mode and a "TDMA" mode as determined by the master device 12. In general, the slotted ALOHA mode is used by the master device 12 to invite protocol messages from the slave devices. The master device 12 periodically broadcasts an ALOHA message to invite slave devices to send their pending protocol messages. This arrangement is known as "slotted ALOHA" because all protocol messages including the ALOHA broadcast are sent during a predetermined time slot. In the preferred embodiment, the ALOHA broadcast is transmitted in command section 26 every three seconds. Responsive to this ALOHA packet and in the next immediate TDMA frame, a slave device transmits its protocol message to the master device 12 in command section 26. The operation of the slotted ALOHA mode is described in further detail in ~~expending~~ U.S. patent 6,597,683 application entitled "MEDIUM ACCESS CONTROL PROTOCOL FOR CENTRALIZED WIRELESS NETWORK COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT" ~~having attorney docket number "INT 99-005" filed on September 10, 1999~~ which is expressly incorporated herein by reference.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 27, line 10, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--The TDMA mode is active when the master device 12 and the slave device which answered the ALOHA message are engaged in a protocol sequence. Such protocol sequences include, for example, a discovery sequence, a shutdown sequence, a data link request sequence, a link service request sequence, a data link terminate sequence, and a service

terminate sequence, among others. The method for carrying out these protocol sequences is described further in ~~co~~pending U.S. patent 6,597,683 ~~application~~ entitled "MEDIUM ACCESS CONTROL PROTOCOL FOR CENTRALIZED WIRELESS NETWORK COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT" ~~having attorney docket number "INT 99-005" filed on September 10, 1999~~ which is expressly incorporated herein by reference. The TDMA mode continues until the entire protocol sequence is completed.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 31, line 17, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Referring now to FIG. 4, as well as FIG, 1 through FIG. 3b, there is shown generally the method of dynamically requesting and assigning a variable-length data slot to a requesting or source slave device and a target slave device. This method is a modified data link request (REQ) and service request (SREQ) sequence as described in ~~co~~pending U.S. patent 6,597,683 ~~application~~ entitled "MEDIUM ACCESS CONTROL PROTOCOL FOR CENTRALIZED WIRELESS NETWORK COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT" ~~having attorney docket number "INT 99-005" filed on September 10, 1999~~ which is expressly incorporated herein by reference. This protocol exchange arises when a first requesting or source slave device requests a data link with a second target stave device. The data link, once established, allows the two slave devices to directly transmit data to each other via the assigned data slot.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 33, line 23, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--At act 150, the master device 12 denies the REQ request of step 110. The master device may carry out any means known in the art for denying the REQ request including, for example,

communicating a Negative Acknowledgement (NACK). ~~Copending~~ U.S. patent 6,597,683 application entitled "MEDIUM ACCESS CONTROL PROTOCOL FOR CENTRALIZED WIRELESS NETWORK COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT" ~~having attorney docket number "INT 99-005" filed on September 10, 1999~~ which is expressly incorporated herein by reference, includes improved sequence means for denying the REQ request and may be used in conjunction with act 150. The process of reference number 100 is then carried out again.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 40, line 14, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--At reference number 314, the master device 12 communicates the scheduled slot reassignment time to the slave devices. In operation, the scheduled reassignment time of the slot will be communicated at the same time as the information about the slot start time and slot length. The master device communicates the slot reassignment information by engaging in a protocol exchange sequence with the source and target devices. Various protocol exchange methods known in the art may be used for such communication. More preferably, the master device utilizes a sequence retransmission request (SRQ) protocol scheme to communicate the adjusted data slot start time and length information. The SRQ protocol scheme is described in ~~copending~~ U.S. patent 6,597,683 application entitled "MEDIUM ACCESS CONTROL PROTOCOL FOR CENTRALIZED WIRELESS NETWORK COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT" ~~having attorney docket number "INT 99-005" filed on September 10, 1999~~ which is expressly incorporated by reference. Once the slot reassignment information has been communicated to the slave devices, the process of reference number 316 is then carried out.--